



# RESTORING ECOSYSTEMS

*"Thirty six centuries ago, Emperor Yu of China advised 'To protect your rivers, protect your mountains.' That same rule applies today. To restore our aquatic species, let us look beyond the water's edge out onto the land that borders it. For the two are inseparable. What happens on that land inevitably is reflected in our streams and rivers."*

Secretary Bruce Babbitt

Over the last five years the Administration has implemented three large scale restoration efforts using new methods, partnerships, and renewed public participation. During 1999 the Department will continue to lead the Administration's efforts to restore three priority watersheds: California's Bay-Delta, the largest estuary on the west coast of North America, the Florida Everglades to restore water flows, and the forests of the Pacific Northwest to replenish trout, coho, chinook and sockeye salmon.

## CALIFORNIA BAY-DELTA

The 1999 budget continues implementation of the California Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration program with a request for \$143.3 million, the full amount

authorized by the California Bay-Delta Environmental Enhancement Act and an increase of \$58.3 million over the 1998 enacted level. The proposed increase reflects an increased capacity to use funds effectively as the program moves into its second year, and anticipates the availability of substantial additional State cost-sharing funds after completion in late 1998 of the final programmatic EIS/EIR on the overall CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

In 1994, Federal and State officials signed the historic Bay-Delta Accord, which called for actions to restore and protect the Bay-Delta ecosystem while strengthening the State's long term economic health. Implementation of the Accord is coordinated by CALFED, a consortium of Federal and State agencies

The California Bay-Delta, the region where the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers meet the San Francisco Bay, is the largest estuary on the west coast of North America. The region once sheltered a stunning variety of fish and wildlife and still provides habitat for 120 fish and wildlife species including some listed as threatened or endangered. The region is also critical to California's economy, providing water to two-thirds of all homes and businesses in the State and irrigating more than four million acres of farmland where, among other crops, 45 percent of the Nation's fruits and vegetables are grown.

**CALIFORNIA BAY-DELTA**  
**(dollars in millions)**

	<u>1999</u> <u>Request</u>
River Channel Changes .....	58.0
Habitat Restoration in	
Floodplains and Marshes .....	27.0
Fish Screen Improvements .....	19.0
Improved Instream Flows .....	20.0
Fish Passage Improvements .....	3.0
Improved Fish Management	
and Hatchery Operations .....	3.0
Water Quality and Temperature	
Improvements .....	2.0
Monitoring, Permit Coordination and	
Other Special Support Programs .....	5.3
Watershed Management .....	3.0
Introduced and Undesirable	
Species Control .....	<u>3.0</u>
Total .....	143.3

with management and regulatory responsibilities in the Bay-Delta. The CALFED Bay-Delta Program was established in May 1995 and charged with developing a comprehensive, long-term solution to the complex and interrelated problems in the Bay-Delta, including uncertain water supplies, aging levees, declining habitat and threatened water quality. CALFED plans to release a draft programmatic EIS/EIR describing three basic options for an overall solution in early 1998, and to file the final programmatic EIS/EIR in October 1998.

The California Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration program builds upon ongoing efforts funded by Federal, State, and stakeholder funds to accomplish ecosystem restoration actions that will be required regardless of



the overall solution ultimately selected for the Bay-Delta. Funds for this program are requested in the Bureau of Reclamation budget, but are distributed among participating agencies based on plans developed by CALFED and approved by the Secretary of the Interior. During 1997, CALFED developed a careful, consultative process to select the highest priority ecosystem restoration actions for funding. It includes two methods of identifying proposals: Public Project Solicitations and CALFED Directed Programs. Under both methods, proposals are reviewed by technical experts and the CALFED program staff before going to the Ecosystem Roundtable and the Bay-Delta Advisory Council for review and advice. A final list of recommended proposals is then forwarded by the CALFED Policy Team to the Secretary of the Interior and the California Resources Secretary for approval.

The Public Project Solicitation published by CALFED in June 1997 resulted in 332 proposals for a total of \$471 million. Contracts totaling \$40 million have been awarded by the State for 36 projects. In addition, \$21 million of the amount appropriated for this program in 1998 has been earmarked for six proposals received from Federal agencies. The remaining funds available for this program in 1998 will be used for CALFED Directed Programs, or for other proposals received during Public Project Solicitations.

Current plans for using the funds requested in 1999 are shown in the accompanying table. These funds will be used to continue some of the projects begun in 1998, and to initiate new projects identified by CALFED using the process described above.

## **EVERGLADES WATERSHED RESTORATION**

One of the Administration's most significant environmental initiatives is the restoration of the Florida Everglades, largely through the efforts of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, the Governor's Commission on a Sustainable South Florida, and other groups. Overall, total Federal funds devoted to this effort are \$282.0 million, an increase of \$54.0 million, or 19 percent, over similar levels in 1998. For the Department, total funding is \$144.2 million, an increase of \$7.7 million over 1998.

As part of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Farm Bill) (Public Law 104-127), Congress appropriated \$200 million to the Department to provide for additional land acquisition and restoration

This vast region, home to over 6 million Americans, seven of the ten fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the country, a huge tourism industry and a large agricultural economy, is also one of the world's most unique environmental resources. Four national parks and three national wildlife refuges are located in the region. Though parks and refuges have afforded some protection to the Everglades, over the course of the past fifty years, manmade changes to water flows have had deleterious effects on both the environment and commercial interests in the region. Biologic indicators, in the form of native flora and fauna and fisheries indicate that the region has sustained severe damage.

#### EVERGLADES RESTORATION (dollars in millions)

	1999 <u>Request</u>
Fish and Wildlife Service Operations .....	7.0
National Park Service Operations .....	21.2
Scientific Research .....	20.6
Land Acquisition .....	81.0
Modified Water Deliveries .....	14.0
Bureau of Indian Affairs .....	<u>0.4</u>
Total funding .....	144.2
<i>(A table with additional details displaying Interior's funding resources for Everglades watershed restoration is found at Appendix C.</i>	

needs. To date, the Department has approved grants to the South Florida Water Management District totaling approximately \$40 million, resulting in the acquisition of about 4,400 acres. The lands will provide important water storage capacity. Additionally, in 1997 the Department announced Federal financial support for two other very important acquisitions: to assist the State in purchasing about 37,000 acres in the Golden Gate Estates, which is in the western watershed of Everglades National Park, and acquisition of about 50,000 acres of the Talisman sugar holdings in the Everglades Agricultural Area. The Department plans to make additional funds available through 1998 in support of these acquisitions. It is anticipated that the entire \$200 million will be expended by December 31, 1999.

Similarly, the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-303), expanded the original Task Force membership to include State, local and tribal members and also authorized the Army Corps of Engineers to engage in a comprehensive restudy of the Central and Southern Florida Project, particularly so that future project changes would restore, preserve,

and protect the South Florida ecosystem. That restudy is due to be complete in 1998.

#### FOREST PLAN FOR THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The President's Forest Plan has allowed for sustainable timber production on Federal lands while fully protecting critical wildlife, fish species, and habitat on Federal, State, local, and private lands. The Department will continue to play a key role in 1999 with total funding of \$68.1 million by managing lands, providing timber for sale, protecting endangered species, and providing the science needed for sound decision-making under the Forest Plan; this is a decrease of \$3.0 million from 1998.

The 24.4 million acres of Federal forest lands in this region are allocated into seven categories created to maintain and restore nearly 80 percent of the late-successional and old-growth forests, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and to allow a sustainable timber harvest of 1.1 billion board feet per year. An aquatic conservation strategy has been implemented to maintain

#### FOREST PLAN (dollars in millions)

	1999 <u>Request</u>
BLM operations .....	35.4
FWS operations .....	17.3
NPS operations .....	0.2
USGS research .....	3.0
BIA timber program .....	1.5
Jobs in the Woods (includes a decrease of \$3.0) .....	<u>10.7</u>
Total funding .....	68.1
<i>(A table with additional details displaying Interior's funding resources for the Forest Plan is found at Appendix D.)</i>	

The forests of northern California, Oregon, and Washington provide clean water, pure air, and a home for plant and animal species, as well a wide range of important economic resources including timber, fisheries, recreation, and tourism. To overcome the legal gridlock that halted all logging in this area, the Administration has successfully implemented a science based forest management plan built to (1) adhere to the law, (2) protect and enhance the environment, (3) provide for a sustainable timber economy, (4) support the region's people and communities during the economic transition, and (5) ensure that the Federal agencies work together to end the legal impasse in the Pacific Northwest.

the health of watersheds. The Department is also working with non-federal land owners to balance species protection with economic development through the implementation of Habitat Conservation Plans.

To provide for a sustainable timber economy during 1999, the Department will offer 213.5 million board feet of timber for sale from BLM managed lands in western Oregon (211 mmbf) and northern California (2.5 mmbf). The FWS will also support the offer of approximately 900 mmbf of timber annually from U.S. Forest Service managed lands. And, as an example of Federal agency cooperation, during 1999, the FWS, National Marine Fisheries Service, BLM, and USGS will continue the streamlined ESA section 7 process to clear timber sales in less than 60 days instead of the 135 days allowed by regulation.

The Department will provide 200 employment opportunities during 1999 to support the region's people and communities during the economic transition through restoring the region's forested watersheds, and to provide job training and retraining for dislocated workers through the Jobs in the Woods program.



*The following are selected annual performance goals from Interior Bureau performance plans supported by the Restoring Ecosystems Initiative:*

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration 1999 goal: In 1999, establish 4 monitoring and research programs at a full level of activity which will effectively determine the principal cause(s) of decline in the coral reef and near shore communities throughout the Florida Keys.

Northwest Forest Plan 1999 goal: In 1999, BLM will offer 213.5 mmbf of timber for sale under the standards and guidelines outlined in the Forest Plan.

Northwest Forest Plan 1999 goal: In 1999, 35,000 acres of Oregon and California Grant Lands will be restored.

*Note: Specific, measurable goals will be developed for the California Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration program after the final programmatic EIS/EIR has been completed, and a preferred alternative selected.*